

## Posyandu Revitalization: How can we do that?



Talking about POSYANDU, some of us could respond cynically. Yes, since 1997 many posyandus have not been regularly served due to multi-crisis. Unfortunately, many of severe malnourished children and pregnant women were not reported. However, do we have any forum that can reach underfive children attendance more than 40% in one day in an area (at hamlet level)? None, except posyandu! Now, the choice is how to make it better. Posyandu's activists introduced an action, named as posyandu revitalization.

Since 2001, UNICEF Surabaya has introduced the 4 pillars of posyandu revitalization which consist of management; personnel (cadres and relevant field staff); supplies; and attractive activities. Some pilot activities were conducted in Probolinggo to improve those 4 pillars. Among those are establishment of "foster parent for posyandu" so-called "Lembaga Pembina Posyandu (LPP)", provision of puppet show and digital weighing scale, training for posyandu cadres and development of community midwife's role in posyandu.

This VoC edition would like to raise one of those supported activities: LPP! It is a village level organization that is appointed by Village Head. Members of LPP are local community members who are really committed, care and pay attention in improving growth and development of children in their respective village. They should not a staff of village head office. LPP's main task is to provide managerial and financial support to posyandu in their village.

In Probolinggo, UNICEF has supported 2 sub-districts: Sukapura and Maron. Now, all villages in Probolinggo have already established LPP, covering 1,278 posyandus and 5,489 cadres. Attendance rate of underfive children (D/S) increased from 40% to 78%. Government budget for posyandu that is distributed through all LPPs in 2007 is Rp. 1,6 billion (USD 183,300) or USD 143/posyandu/year. Pak Dwi Hartono, a Section Chief of District Rural Development said: "We have succeeded in advocating the decision makers in this district. Bupati of Probolinggo endorsed a letter in 2003 to allocate special fund for posyandu that should be managed by LPP. This year (2007), the budget is around USD 183,300 for posyandu and USD 38,900 for posyandu supervision". However, LPP is not only managing fund from government. It also raises fund from the community. Ibu Lilis, the Chairperson of Banyuanyar Tengah, Banyuanyar sub-district explained: "LPP has collected donation from several local people approximately Rp. 30,000 - Rp. 50,000 or around Rp. 360,000/year (USD 40). We provide a record donation card to each donor person"

By the year 2003, UNICEF introduced this initiative to Tulungagung district. Some pilot activities were implemented in Boyolangu sub-district (17 villages) and Campurdarat sub-district (9 villages). Good results were also gathered. Now, LPP has established in all (245) villages in Tulungagung covering 1,231 posyandu and served by 6,253 cadres. The attendance rate of underfive children increased from 68% to 82%. In 2007, District Budget allocated Rp. 738,600,000 or USD 82,000 for posyandu (USD 67/posyandu/year). The chairperson of LPP in Beji said: "I really enjoy and proud to be selected as a Chairperson of LPP. I'm like a father for children in this village. Now, all posyandu in our village run well. Number of children comes to posyandu is increased. It is good for cadres also, because it reduced their home visit activity to check children who did not come to posyandu. So cadres have enough time to do administrative works. Mothers who come to posyandu are also happy because they have other activities and get more services. We run 'arisan' among mothers and cadres. They also gather information on child feeding and other information related with women and family economic management"

Posyandu Beji also collects fund from community. Each month it gets Rp. 50,000 from community leaders, private maternal clinics, community leaders, retired civil servants, etc. It means this posyandu collects Rp. 600,000 per year or USD 67/year.

The initiative on LPP is really a community based approach that bringing back posyandu to its slogan FROM - FOR - BY the community. Government should support with supplies and activities which can not be provided by the community. Through functioning posyandu, the nutritional status of underfive children and mothers can be monitored. Malnourished underfive children can be detected earlier and adequate referral and treatment can be provided timely.\*\*\*

